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Teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making: Evidence from public schools in the Schools Division of Catbalogan City

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Abstract

Aim: This study aimed to determine the extent of teachers' involvement in school-wide program decision-making in District X, Schools Division of Catbalogan City, during School Year 2025–2026. It examined teacher participation in curriculum and instruction, learner development and support, policy formulation, resource allocation and utilization, and program monitoring and evaluation, as well as the factors influencing teacher involvement in collaborative school governance and educational decision-making.

Methodology: The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design involving teachers and school administrators. Data were gathered using structured survey questionnaires and analyzed through appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to determine the extent of teacher involvement, administrators' perceptions, relationships among selected variables, and challenges affecting participation in school-wide decision-making.

Results: The findings revealed that teachers demonstrated a high level of involvement across all areas of school-wide program decision-making, while school administrators perceived teacher participation to a very great extent. Teachers actively participated in curriculum planning, learner support, policy formulation, resource allocation, and program evaluation. Teachers' attitudes toward participation exhibited the strongest positive relationship with their level of involvement, whereas years of teaching experience and relevant in-service training showed weak but statistically significant relationships. Communication gaps, hierarchical organizational culture, and limited incentives emerged as the primary barriers to meaningful teacher participation.

Conclusion: The findings underscore the importance of participatory leadership and collaborative school governance in strengthening teacher involvement and enhancing school effectiveness. Promoting effective communication, continuous professional development, mentoring, leadership capacity building, and shared decision-making may foster greater teacher engagement, improve curriculum implementation, support instructional effectiveness, and contribute to sustainable school improvement.

Keywords: *teacher involvement, school-wide decision-making, participatory leadership, school governance, professional development*

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary educational systems increasingly recognize that sustainable school improvement depends on evidence-informed leadership, collaborative governance, and the meaningful engagement of teachers in organizational decision-making. As educational institutions continue to respond to learning recovery, accountability demands, and rapidly changing instructional contexts, schools are expected to use educational evidence not only to monitor learner performance but also to guide planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of school-wide programs. This shift has strengthened the adoption of Data-Driven Decision-Making (DDDM), an approach that integrates educational data with professional judgment to support responsive and equitable educational management. Recent international studies indicate that effective DDDM enhances instructional quality, promotes organizational learning, improves resource allocation, and supports continuous school improvement when teachers actively participate in interpreting



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and applying educational data (Datnow & Park, 2022; Prenger & Schildkamp, 2022; Tayem & Bourgeois, 2024; UNESCO, 2024).

Current educational reforms likewise emphasize that successful school improvement depends not solely on administrative leadership but on collaborative decision-making among educators. Teacher participation has become an essential component of distributed leadership, professional learning communities, and participatory governance because teachers possess firsthand knowledge of learners' needs, classroom realities, and instructional challenges. Recent evidence suggests that schools characterized by collaborative leadership and shared decision-making demonstrate stronger instructional coherence, greater organizational commitment, improved professional learning, and more sustainable educational innovations (Harris, 2021; Yang & Chang, 2024; Awyan & Quines, 2025; Rance et al., 2025). Rather than serving merely as implementers of school policies, teachers increasingly function as instructional leaders whose professional expertise contributes significantly to evidence-informed school governance.

Despite these advances, meaningful teacher participation in data-informed decision-making remains inconsistent across many educational systems. Although teachers routinely collect, analyze, and utilize classroom assessment data, they often have limited opportunities to contribute to broader school planning, resource allocation, policy formulation, and program evaluation. Recent studies report that centralized governance structures, insufficient data literacy, excessive workload, and limited collaborative opportunities continue to restrict teachers' participation in organizational decision-making (Schelling & Rubenstein, 2021; Tayem & Bourgeois, 2024). Furthermore, many educators continue to perceive data use primarily as an accountability requirement rather than a mechanism for reflective practice, instructional innovation, and continuous improvement. These challenges underscore the importance of strengthening professional learning opportunities that promote collaborative inquiry, evidence-informed leadership, and teacher agency in school governance.

Within the Philippine educational system, participatory governance is institutionalized through School-Based Management (SBM), which encourages shared responsibility among school leaders, teachers, parents, and community stakeholders in planning and implementing school improvement initiatives. Consistent with the Department of Education's continuing emphasis on evidence-based planning, schools are expected to utilize learner achievement data, assessment results, and performance indicators in developing School Improvement Plans (SIPs), Annual Implementation Plans (AIPs), and learning recovery initiatives. However, empirical studies continue to show that decision-making frequently remains centralized, with school administrators retaining primary authority while teachers assume largely consultative roles with limited influence on final organizational decisions (De Castro, 2021; Carillo & Janer, 2022). Consequently, teachers' professional expertise is often underutilized despite their direct understanding of learners' academic needs, instructional challenges, and contextual realities. Recent Philippine studies further emphasize that greater teacher participation contributes to more responsive educational programs, stronger organizational commitment, enhanced professional collaboration, and improved implementation of school improvement initiatives (Biñas et al., 2023).

In District X, Schools Division of Catbalogan City, schools have consistently complied with Department of Education requirements concerning planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of educational programs. Between School Years 2022 and 2025, schools regularly prepared School Improvement Plans and Annual Implementation Plans using available school performance data while implementing major learning recovery initiatives, including Catch-up Fridays and the National Learning Camp (DepEd, 2023; DepEd, 2024). Nevertheless, preliminary observations indicate that meaningful teacher involvement in interpreting educational data and participating in strategic planning remains limited. Planning activities continue to be primarily facilitated by school heads and selected coordinators, whereas many teachers have relatively few opportunities to participate actively in analyzing school performance data or influencing organizational decisions. Similarly, school research activities suggest that teacher participation remained largely compliance-oriented, as evidenced by the limited number of teacher-initiated proposals and the absence of Basic Education Research Fund (BERF) grants in 2026 (DepEd Region VIII, 2026).

These conditions reveal a continuing disconnect between teachers' extensive responsibilities in implementing school programs and their comparatively limited participation in evidence-informed planning, organizational decision-making, monitoring, and evaluation. Although teachers actively implement educational initiatives, opportunities for genuine collaboration in analyzing school data and shaping organizational priorities remain constrained. Such circumstances raise important concerns regarding the extent to which existing governance structures maximize teachers' professional expertise in advancing school improvement.

Although previous investigations have examined school leadership, School-Based Management, governance practices, learner outcomes, and teacher participation independently, relatively few studies have examined teacher involvement specifically within the context of data-informed school-wide program decision-making. Moreover, limited empirical evidence exists regarding how teachers participate across the interconnected processes of planning,



implementation, monitoring, evaluation, resource allocation, policy formulation, and learning recovery initiatives in Philippine public secondary schools, particularly within the Schools Division of Catbalogan City. By integrating the perspectives of participatory governance, distributed leadership, teacher professional agency, and evidence-informed educational management, this study extends existing literature beyond traditional leadership and governance research. It contributes new empirical evidence on how teacher involvement supports collaborative instructional leadership, sustainable school improvement, and evidence-informed educational innovation in local public-school contexts.

Accordingly, this study determined the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making in District X, Schools Division of Catbalogan City, and examined the factors influencing meaningful teacher participation in evidence-informed governance. Ultimately, the findings contributed to the development of more collaborative leadership practices, stronger professional learning communities, and sustainable governance strategies that enhanced instructional effectiveness, organizational capacity, and continuous school improvement.

Review of Related Literature and Studies

Data-Driven Decision-Making in Educational Management

Data-Driven Decision-Making (DDDM) has become an essential strategy for improving educational quality, instructional effectiveness, and organizational performance. It involves the systematic collection, analysis, interpretation, and utilization of educational data to support planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of school programs. Datnow and Park (2022) emphasized that effective educational leadership depends on the meaningful use of data to guide instructional improvement, allocate resources efficiently, and strengthen organizational learning. Similarly, Prenger and Schildkamp (2022) explained that collaborative data use enables educators to make informed instructional decisions that promote continuous school improvement.

The increasing emphasis on evidence-informed educational leadership has expanded the role of DDDM beyond accountability toward collaborative professional inquiry. Jimerson and Wayman (2021) found that professional learning focused on data use significantly improves teachers' capacity to interpret educational information and apply evidence in instructional decision-making. Likewise, Tayem and Bourgeois (2024) reported that successful implementation of DDDM depends not only on the availability of educational data but also on organizational support, collaborative practices, and teachers' active participation throughout the decision-making process. UNESCO (2024) likewise emphasized that educational leaders should cultivate school cultures where educational evidence supports innovation, equity, and continuous improvement.

Teacher Participation in Data-Informed Decision-Making

Teacher participation is widely recognized as a critical component of effective school governance because teachers possess direct knowledge of learners' needs, classroom experiences, and instructional challenges. Schelling and Rubenstein (2021) observed that although teachers routinely utilize classroom assessment data, they are often excluded from broader organizational decisions involving school planning and resource allocation. Such limited participation reduces opportunities for collaborative problem-solving and shared accountability.

Research consistently demonstrates that schools with greater teacher participation in decision-making experience stronger instructional coherence, improved professional collaboration, and more responsive educational programs. Carillo and Janer (2022) found that teacher involvement in school programs enhances organizational effectiveness and promotes stronger implementation of educational initiatives. Likewise, De Castro (2021) emphasized that teachers' participation in instructional decision-making strengthens commitment to school improvement and supports evidence-based educational planning.

Recent international studies further reinforce these findings. Yang and Chang (2024) reported that distributed leadership enhances teacher professional development by strengthening professional learning communities and encouraging collaborative decision-making. Similarly, Awyan and Quines (2025) found that distributed leadership positively influences teachers' organizational commitment through active participation in school governance and collaborative teamwork.

Teacher Professional Agency and Shared Governance

Teacher professional agency refers to teachers' ability to exercise professional judgment and contribute meaningfully to instructional, curricular, and organizational decisions. Educational leadership research increasingly recognizes teacher agency as fundamental to sustainable school improvement because teachers contribute valuable instructional expertise and contextual knowledge.



Harris (2021) explained that distributed leadership strengthens school effectiveness by promoting shared responsibility, collaborative leadership, and collective accountability among educators. Similarly, Rance et al. (2025) concluded that collaborative decision-making encourages greater teacher engagement, strengthens professional commitment, and improves implementation of school-wide initiatives. These findings support the view that participatory governance contributes to stronger organizational performance by empowering teachers to become active partners in educational leadership.

Within the Philippine educational setting, Biñas et al. (2023) emphasized that collaborative decision-making enables schools to implement curriculum innovations more effectively because teachers actively contribute to planning, implementation, and continuous improvement of instructional programs.

Challenges in Teacher Participation in Data Use

Despite the recognized benefits of DDDM, several challenges continue to limit meaningful teacher participation in educational decision-making. Schelling and Rubenstein (2021) noted that many teachers perceive data use primarily as an administrative responsibility rather than a collaborative professional process. Tayem and Bourgeois (2024) likewise identified excessive workload, insufficient collaboration time, limited organizational support, and inadequate professional learning opportunities as major barriers to effective teacher participation in data-informed decision-making.

Kyomugisha (2025) further reported that centralized leadership structures and ineffective communication reduce opportunities for collaborative governance within schools. These organizational barriers often prevent teachers from participating fully in planning, monitoring, and evaluating school programs despite their valuable instructional expertise.

Data-Informed Governance in the Philippine Context

The Philippine educational system promotes evidence-informed governance through School-Based Management, School Improvement Planning, Annual Implementation Planning, and continuous monitoring of school performance. These initiatives encourage schools to utilize assessment data, learner achievement records, attendance reports, and performance indicators when planning educational interventions.

Nevertheless, Philippine studies continue to demonstrate that meaningful teacher participation remains inconsistent. De Castro (2021) observed that instructional decisions are still largely influenced by school administrators despite policies encouraging participatory governance. Likewise, Carillo and Janer (2022) reported that teachers frequently participate during program implementation but remain less involved in planning and organizational decision-making. These findings suggest that strengthening teacher participation remains essential for improving collaborative governance, evidence-informed educational management, and sustainable school improvement within Philippine public schools.

Synthesis of the Literature and Research Gap

The reviewed literature consistently demonstrates that Data-Driven Decision-Making supports instructional improvement, organizational effectiveness, evidence-informed leadership, and continuous school improvement. Studies likewise establish that meaningful teacher participation enhances professional agency, collaborative governance, distributed leadership, and organizational commitment. Despite these documented benefits, barriers such as centralized leadership, limited collaboration opportunities, insufficient professional learning, and organizational constraints continue to restrict teachers' active participation in school-wide decision-making.

Although both international and Philippine studies recognize the importance of teacher participation in educational governance, relatively limited empirical evidence exists regarding teachers' involvement in data-informed planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of school-wide programs within Philippine public secondary schools. Existing local studies have focused primarily on leadership, curriculum implementation, and school improvement, while fewer investigations have examined teacher participation specifically within the context of evidence-informed governance. Moreover, studies addressing teacher involvement in decision-making related to learning recovery initiatives remain scarce. Accordingly, this study sought to address these gaps by examining teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making and identifying factors that influence meaningful participation in evidence-informed educational governance.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on three complementary theories that explain teacher involvement in school-wide, data-informed decision-making: Participative Decision-Making Theory (Vroom & Yetton, 1973), Data-Driven Decision-

Making Model (Mandinach, 2012), and Distributed Leadership Theory (Spillane, 2006). Together, these theories provided a framework for understanding how teachers contribute to planning, data interpretation, and school improvement. Participative Decision-Making Theory emphasizes the importance of involving stakeholders in decisions based on their knowledge and expertise. In schools, it highlights the value of teachers' participation because of their direct understanding of learners, instruction, and classroom realities, thereby strengthening ownership, accountability, and commitment to school programs. The Data-Driven Decision-Making Model explains how educational data are collected, analyzed, and used to improve school practices. In this study, it helped explain teachers' role in evidence-based planning and how factors such as data literacy, training, and organizational support influence their participation. Distributed Leadership Theory views leadership as a shared process among school stakeholders rather than the sole responsibility of administrators. It recognizes teachers as key contributors to school improvement through collaboration, shared expertise, and joint decision-making. Taken together, these theories suggest that teacher involvement in school-wide decision-making is strengthened by inclusive governance, effective data use, and shared leadership.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents the research paradigm of the study.

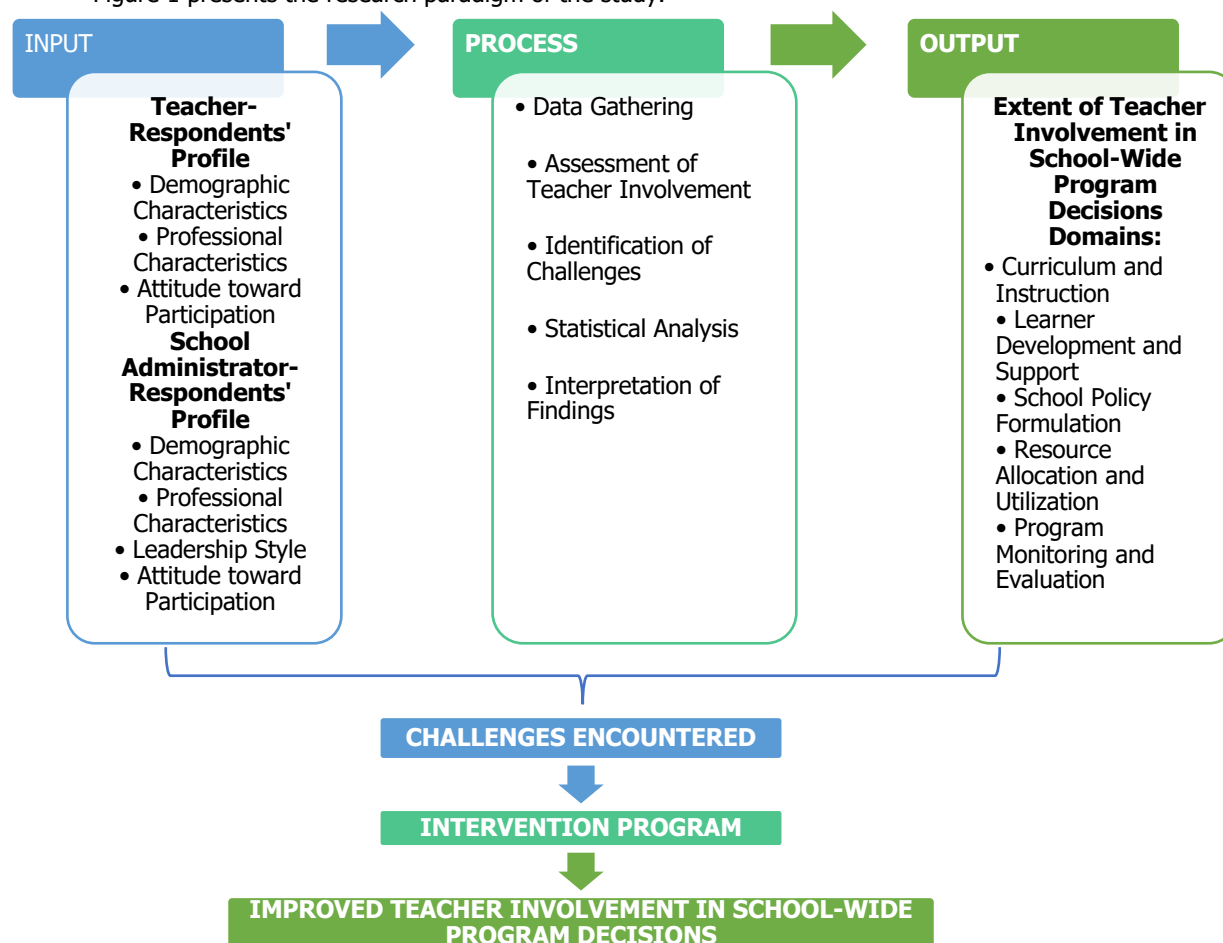


Figure 1. Research Paradigm

The framework showed the relationships among the variables examined to determine the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions in District X, Schools Division of Catbalogan City.

The framework was anchored on the idea that the profiles of teachers and school administrators, together with the challenges they encountered, influenced teacher participation in school governance processes. The input of

the study consisted of the profiles of the teacher-respondents and school administrator-respondents. For teachers, these included age and sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, gross monthly family income, years in teaching, relevant in-service trainings, latest IPCRF rating, and attitude toward teacher participation in school-wide decision-making. For school administrators, the variables included age and sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, gross monthly family income, years of service as a school administrator, relevant in-service trainings, leadership style, and attitude toward teacher participation in school-wide decision-making. These variables were considered possible factors affecting teacher participation. The process involved the collection, organization, analysis, and interpretation of data on teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions. Through this process, the study examined the extent of teacher participation and identified the factors and challenges that influenced their engagement. The study's output was the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions, specifically in curriculum and instruction, learner development and support, school policy formulation, resource allocation and utilization, and program monitoring and evaluation. The framework also considered the challenges encountered by teachers and school administrators as intervening variables that could either support or hinder participation. Based on the findings, an intervention program was proposed to address the identified challenges, strengthen collaborative leadership, and enhance teacher participation in school-wide decision-making. A feedback mechanism was likewise included to emphasize the continuous nature of school improvement and shared governance.

Statement of the Problem

In contemporary school governance, teachers are expected to contribute not only to classroom instruction but also to the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of school-wide programs. Their active participation is essential because they possess firsthand knowledge of learners' needs, instructional challenges, and classroom realities that can improve educational decision-making. Meaningful teacher involvement promotes collaborative leadership, strengthens school governance, and contributes to more responsive and sustainable educational programs. However, decision-making in many schools remains largely centralized among school heads and selected coordinators, limiting opportunities for teachers to participate meaningfully and reducing their sense of ownership, accountability, and professional engagement.

In District X, Schools Division of Catbalogan City, teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making remains an important educational concern amid increasing emphasis on collaborative governance and evidence-based planning. Despite existing initiatives promoting participatory leadership, limited empirical evidence is available regarding teachers' actual involvement in curriculum and instruction, learner support, school policy formulation, resource allocation, and program monitoring and evaluation. Likewise, little is known about how teacher and administrator characteristics, together with organizational challenges, influence teacher participation in school-wide decisions. Addressing these concerns is important for strengthening educational leadership, improving collaborative governance, enhancing curriculum implementation, and supporting sustainable school improvement. Hence, this study sought to determine the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions and identify factors that may guide the development of an intervention program for strengthening participatory school governance.

General Objective

To determine the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions in District X, Schools Division of Catbalogan City, during School Year 2025–2026.

Specific Objectives

The study aimed to:

1. Describe the profiles of the teacher-respondents and school administrator-respondents.
2. Determine the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions.
3. Determine whether significant relationships exist between teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions and the profiles of the respondents.
4. Identify the challenges encountered by teacher-respondents and school administrator-respondents in promoting and implementing teacher involvement in school-wide decision-making.
5. Determine whether significant relationships exist between teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions and the challenges encountered by the respondents.
6. Propose an intervention program based on the findings of the study.

Research Questions

1. What is the profile of the teacher-respondents in terms of the following variables:
 - 1.1 age and sex;
 - 1.2 civil status;
 - 1.3 highest educational attainment;
 - 1.4 gross monthly family income;
 - 1.5 number of years in teaching;
 - 1.6 relevant in-service trainings;
 - 1.7 performance rating based on the latest IPCRF; and
 - 1.8 attitude toward teacher participation in school-wide decision-making?
2. What is the profile of the school administrator-respondents in terms of:
 - 2.1 age and sex;
 - 2.2 civil status;
 - 2.3 highest educational attainment;
 - 2.4 gross monthly family income;
 - 2.5 number of years in service as a school administrator;
 - 2.6 relevant in-service trainings;
 - 2.7 leadership style as self-assessed; and
 - 2.8 attitude toward teacher participation in school-wide decision-making?
3. What is the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions, particularly in the following areas:
 - 3.1 curriculum and instruction;
 - 3.2 learner development and support;
 - 3.3 school policy formulation;
 - 3.4 resource allocation and utilization; and
 - 3.5 program monitoring and evaluation?
4. Is there a significant relationship between teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions and the teacher-respondents' profile?
5. Is there a significant relationship between teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions and the school administrator-respondents' profile?
6. What are the challenges encountered by the teacher-respondents and school administrator-respondents in promoting and implementing teacher involvement in school-wide decisions?
7. Is there a significant relationship between the teacher-respondents' extent of involvement in school-wide program decisions and the following:
 - 7.1 challenges encountered by the teacher-respondents; and
 - 7.2 challenges encountered by the school administrator-respondents in promoting and implementing teacher involvement in school-wide decisions?
8. What intervention program may be proposed based on the findings of the study?

Hypotheses

- H₀₁*: There is no significant relationship between the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions and the teacher-respondents' profile variables.
- H₀₂*: There is no significant relationship between the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions and the school administrator-respondents' profile variables.
- H₀₃*: There is no significant relationship between the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions and the challenges encountered by the teacher-respondents.
- H₀₄*: There is no significant relationship between the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions and the challenges encountered by the school administrator-respondents.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design. This design was considered most appropriate because the study sought to describe existing conditions and examine the relationships among naturally occurring variables without manipulating them. The descriptive method was used to describe the respondents' profiles, determine the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making, and identify the challenges affecting

teacher participation. Meanwhile, the correlational method was employed to determine the significant relationships between teacher involvement, respondents' profile variables, and the challenges encountered. Through this design, the study generated empirical evidence on teacher participation in school-wide program decision-making and its associated factors within the context of educational leadership and school governance.

Population and Sampling

The study involved a total of 102 respondents, consisting of 94 teachers and 8 school administrators from District X, Schools Division of Catbalogan City. It utilized the total enumeration sampling technique, wherein all members of the target population were included because the population was relatively small and manageable. This sampling approach was considered appropriate as it ensured complete representation of the population, minimized sampling bias, and provided a comprehensive assessment of teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making and school governance.

Table 1

Distribution of the Target Number of Teacher and School Administrator Respondents by School

Respondent Schools	Teachers (n)	School Administrators (n)
Rama Elementary School	11	1
Cagutsan Elementary School	7	1
Cinco Elementary School	9	1
Mombon Elementary School	7	1
Bagongon Elementary School	6	1
Buluan Elementary School	7	1
Canhawan Elementary School	4	1
Antonio G. Tuason National High School	43	1
Total	94	8

Research Instruments

The primary instrument used in this study was a structured questionnaire checklist adapted from Carillo and Janer (2022) and modified to fit the study's purpose. It had four parts: Part I gathered the respondents' personal and professional profiles; Part II measured their attitudes toward teacher participation in school-wide decision-making using a five-point Likert scale; Part III assessed the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions in the areas of curriculum and instruction, learner development and support, school policy formulation, resource allocation and utilization, and program monitoring and evaluation; and Part IV identified the challenges encountered by teachers and school administrators in promoting teacher involvement in school-wide decisions.

Content Validation

The questionnaire used in this study was adapted from Carillo and Janer (2022) and modified to align with the objectives and context of the present study on teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making. To establish its content validity, the adapted instrument was evaluated by three (3) expert validators with specialization in research methodology and educational management. The validators assessed each item based on its relevance, clarity, representativeness, and alignment with the study's objectives and research variables.

The content validation process utilized the Content Validity Index (CVI), wherein each validator rated the relevance of every questionnaire item. The ratings were used to compute the Item-Level Content Validity Index (I-CVI) and the Scale-Level Content Validity Index (S-CVI). The instrument obtained an S-CVI of 0.97, indicating excellent content validity and confirming that the questionnaire was appropriate for measuring the constructs under investigation. The comments and recommendations of the validators were likewise incorporated to improve the wording, organization, and overall quality of the instrument before its final administration.

Since the questionnaire was adapted from a previously validated instrument developed by Carillo and Janer (2022), pilot testing and reliability analysis were not conducted in the present study. Instead, the researchers established the instrument's suitability for the local context through expert content validation and the incorporation of the validators' recommendations before data collection.

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Data Collection Procedure

The data for this study were gathered through a systematic and ethically guided process. Data collection was conducted from February to March 2026 through face-to-face administration of the questionnaires in the participating public secondary schools in District X, Schools Division of Catbalogan City. Before the conduct of the study, the researcher secured approval from the Schools Division Superintendent of Catbalogan City and coordinated with the school heads of the participating schools regarding the schedule and administration of the research instrument.

Before distributing the questionnaires, the researcher explained the purpose, significance, and procedures of the study to the prospective respondents and emphasized that participation was entirely voluntary. Each respondent was provided with an informed consent form, which outlined the objectives of the study, their rights as participants, the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, and the assurance that the data would be used solely for academic and research purposes. Only respondents who voluntarily signed the informed consent form were included in the study.

After obtaining informed consent, the questionnaires were administered to the respondents, retrieved upon completion, and checked for completeness and consistency before data encoding and statistical analysis. Throughout the data collection process, the researcher strictly observed ethical research standards by ensuring the confidentiality, anonymity, and secure handling of all information provided by the respondents.

Treatment of Data

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistical tools, including frequency count, percentage, mean, median, mean absolute deviation (MAD), and weighted mean, were employed to summarize and describe the respondents' profiles, attitudes toward teacher participation, the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making, and the challenges encountered by teachers and school administrators.

For inferential analysis, the Shapiro-Wilk test was first conducted to determine whether the data were normally distributed and to guide the selection of the appropriate statistical procedures. The point-biserial correlation coefficient was used to determine the relationship between teacher involvement and dichotomous profile variables, such as sex. The eta correlation coefficient was employed to examine the association between teacher involvement and nominal variables with more than two categories, such as educational attainment and position, where no inherent ordering exists. Meanwhile, Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficient (Spearman's rho) was used to determine the relationships between teacher involvement and ordinal variables or variables with non-normally distributed data, including years of service, attitudes toward teacher participation, and the challenges encountered by the respondents.

All hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance, and data processing and statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to the fundamental ethical principles governing educational research and complied with the institutional ethical guidelines of the Schools Division of Catbalogan City and the participating schools to safeguard the rights, dignity, and welfare of the respondents. Before data collection, permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Schools Division Superintendent of Catbalogan City, and coordination was made with the school heads of the participating schools.

The purpose, objectives, and procedures of the study were clearly explained to the prospective respondents before their participation. Participation was entirely voluntary, and each respondent provided written informed consent after being fully informed of the nature of the study, the expected duration of participation, their rights as research participants, and the intended use of the collected data. Respondents were assured that their identities and responses would remain confidential and anonymous, and that they could withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty or adverse consequences. All data collected were treated with strict confidentiality, securely stored, and used exclusively for academic and research purposes in accordance with applicable institutional ethical standards.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the study in a clear and logically organized manner.

The results showed that only three teacher profile variables were significantly related to the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decisions: attitude toward participation, years in teaching, and relevant in-service trainings.

Table 2

Relationship Between the Teacher-Respondents' Extent of Involvement in School-Wide Program Decisions and their Profile Variables

Variables	Association Coefficient	Degree	p-Value @ $\alpha=.05$	Evaluation/ Decision
Age	$\rho = 0.071$	Very Weak	0.497	NS / Accept H_0
Sex	$r_{pb} = -0.110$	Very weak	0.291	NS / Accept H_0
Civil Status	$\eta = 0.041$	Very Weak	0.624	NS / Accept H_0
Highest Educational Attainment	$\rho = -0.004$	Very Weak	0.966	NS / Accept H_0
Gross Monthly Family Income	$\rho = 0.162$	Very Weak	0.120	NS / Accept H_0
Number of Years in Teaching	$\rho = 0.298$	Weak	0.048	S / Reject H_0
Relevant In-Service Trainings	$\rho = 0.286$	Weak	0.042	S / Reject H_0
Performance Rating Based on the Latest IPCRF	$\rho = -0.011$	Very Weak	0.914	NS / Accept H_0
Attitude Toward Teacher Participation in School-Wide Decision-Making	$\rho = 0.667$	Strong	0.000	S / Reject H_0

The findings revealed that teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making was associated with only three profile variables: attitude toward participation, years in teaching, and relevant in-service training. Among these, attitude toward participation emerged as the most influential factor ($\rho = 0.667$, $p < .001$), suggesting that teachers who value collaborative governance and recognize the importance of their professional role are more likely to engage actively in school-wide decision-making. This finding highlights that meaningful participation extends beyond the availability of opportunities; it is also shaped by teachers' sense of professional agency, ownership, and commitment to shared leadership. When teachers perceive that their contributions are valued and can influence school improvement initiatives, they are more inclined to participate in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation activities. This supports the view that fostering positive attitudes toward collaboration is fundamental to strengthening participatory school governance and advancing sustainable school improvement (Donhito, 2024; Rance et al., 2025).

Although years in teaching ($\rho = 0.298$, $p = .048$) and relevant in-service trainings ($\rho = 0.286$, $p = .042$) were also significantly related to teacher involvement, their relatively weaker relationships suggest that experience and professional development alone do not guarantee active participation in organizational decision-making. Rather, these factors appear to enhance teachers' confidence, competence, and readiness to contribute when supported by a school culture that values collaboration and shared responsibility. This implies that schools should move beyond simply increasing teachers' experience or providing professional development opportunities by cultivating inclusive leadership practices that encourage teacher voice, strengthen professional learning communities, and create meaningful avenues for participation in school governance. Such an approach is more likely to sustain teacher engagement and improve evidence-informed decision-making, ultimately contributing to more responsive and effective school improvement initiatives (Tayem & Bourgeois, 2024; Yang & Chang, 2024; Rance et al., 2025).

Table 3

Relationship Between the Teacher-Respondents' Extent of Involvement in School-Wide Program and the School Administrators' Profile

Variables	Association		p-Value @ $\alpha=.05$	Evaluation/ Decision
	Coefficient	Degree		
Age	$\rho = 0.030$	Very Weak	0.943	NS / Accept H_0
Sex	$r_{pb} = -0.525$	Moderate	0.182	NS / Accept H_0
Civil Status	$\eta = 0.189$	Very Weak	0.447	NS / Accept H_0
Highest Educational Attainment	$\rho = 0.861$	Very Strong	0.006	S / Reject H_0
Gross Monthly Family Income	$\rho = 0.000$	Negligible	1.000	NS / Accept H_0
Number of Years in Service as a School Administrator	$\rho = 0.110$	Very Weak	0.796	NS / Accept H_0
Relevant In-Service Trainings	$\rho = 0.119$	Very Weak	0.779	NS / Accept H_0
Leadership Style as Self-Assessed	$\eta = 0.216$	Weak	0.655	NS / Accept H_0
Attitude Toward Teacher Participation in School-Wide Decision-Making	$\rho = 0.248$	Weak	0.049	S / Reject H_0

The findings revealed that among the profile variables of school administrators, only highest educational attainment and attitude toward teacher participation were significantly associated with the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making. Of these, highest educational attainment demonstrated the strongest relationship ($\rho = 0.861$, $p = .006$), suggesting that administrators with advanced academic preparation are more likely to foster participatory leadership and create opportunities for teachers to engage meaningfully in organizational decision-making. This finding implies that advanced professional preparation may enhance administrators' understanding of collaborative governance, evidence-informed leadership, and shared accountability, enabling them to recognize teachers as valuable partners in planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating school programs rather than merely as implementers of administrative directives. Such leadership practices contribute to a more inclusive governance structure that supports continuous school improvement (UNESCO, 2024; Rance et al., 2025).

Although attitude toward teacher participation also showed a significant relationship with teacher involvement ($p = 0.248$, $p = .049$), its relatively weaker association suggests that positive perceptions alone may not be sufficient to promote meaningful teacher engagement. Administrators may value teacher participation conceptually, but its successful implementation depends on translating these beliefs into concrete leadership practices that encourage shared decision-making, open communication, and collaborative professional learning. These findings indicate that meaningful teacher participation is shaped more by administrators' leadership competencies and professional preparation than by their personal or demographic characteristics. Consequently, leadership development initiatives should strengthen administrators' capacities in participatory leadership, collaborative governance, and evidence-informed school management to cultivate school environments where teachers are empowered to contribute actively to organizational decisions and continuous school improvement (Awyan & Quines, 2025).

Table 4

Relationship Between the Teacher-Respondents' Extent of Involvement in School-Wide Program Decisions and the Challenges Encountered by the Teacher-Respondents

Variables	Association Coefficient	Degree	p-Value @ $\alpha=.05$	Evaluation/ Decision
The Challenges Encountered by the Teachers in Promoting and Implementing Teacher Involvement in School-Wide Decisions	$\rho = 0.443$	Moderate	0.019	Significant/ Reject H_0

The test of the relationship showed that the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a significant relationship between the teacher-respondents' extent of involvement in school-wide program decisions and the challenges they encountered. The computed p-value of 0.019, which was lower than the 0.05 level of significance, and Spearman's rho of 0.443 indicated a moderate positive correlation. This means that challenges such as limited communication, time constraints, workload pressures, and organizational culture were significantly associated with teachers' level of involvement in school-wide decision-making. This finding supports recent studies showing that teacher participation is often constrained by structural and organizational barriers such as excessive workload, top-down leadership, and limited opportunities for genuine collaboration (Cabilla, 2025; Kyomugisha, 2025). This finding implies that increasing teacher involvement requires more than simply inviting teachers to participate. Schools must also address the conditions that make participation meaningful and sustainable. When communication is weak, leadership is centralized, and workload is heavy, teacher participation may remain procedural rather than collaborative. Studies on distributed and collaborative leadership emphasize that teacher engagement improves when school leaders build trust, strengthen communication, reduce barriers, and provide institutional support for shared decision-making (Rance et al., 2025). Therefore, school administrators should improve communication channels, minimize barriers, and provide structured support systems that enable teachers to participate more actively in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. By addressing these challenges, schools can promote inclusive governance, strengthen teacher agency, and improve the effectiveness of school programs (Cabilla, 2025; Rance et al., 2025).

Table 5

Relationship Between the Teacher-Respondents' Extent of Involvement in School-Wide Program Decisions and the Challenges Encountered by the School Administrators

Variables	Association Coefficient	Degree	p-Value @ $\alpha=.05$	Evaluation/ Decision
The Challenges Encountered by the School Administrators in Promoting and Implementing Teacher Involvement in School-Wide Decisions	$\rho = 0.506$	Moderate	0.041	Significant / Reject H_0

The test of relationship showed that the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a significant relationship between the teacher-respondents' extent of involvement in school-wide program decisions and the challenges encountered by school administrator-respondents in promoting teacher involvement. The analysis showed a moderate positive correlation ($\rho = 0.506$, $p = 0.041$), which means that the challenges faced by administrators were significantly



associated with the level of teacher participation in school-wide decision-making. This suggests that teacher involvement is influenced not only by teachers' readiness but also by administrative conditions such as communication systems, shared leadership structures, time constraints, and institutional support. This finding is consistent with studies showing that collaborative decision-making depends on leadership support, open communication, and organizational structures that reduce barriers to participation (Kyomugisha, 2025; Rance et al., 2025). This finding has important implications for teaching, learning, and school governance. It shows that improving teacher involvement requires not only inviting teachers to participate but also addressing leadership and institutional barriers that limit meaningful engagement. Studies on teacher participation and distributed leadership emphasize that when administrators build trust, improve communication, provide opportunities for collaboration, and reduce top-down practices, teachers become more active in school improvement efforts (Cabilla, 2025; Rance et al., 2025). Therefore, school administrators should be supported through leadership development and collaborative governance initiatives to help them create a more inclusive decision-making environment. By addressing these challenges, schools can strengthen teacher-administrator collaboration and improve the responsiveness and sustainability of school programs (Kyomugisha, 2025).

Conclusions

Based on the analysis and interpretation of the data, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. The teacher-respondents were predominantly female, married, and in their mid-30s, with moderate age variation. Most possessed MA/Graduate Units or a Master's Degree, had a monthly family income ranging from ₱30,000 to ₱39,999, and had 7–9 years of teaching experience. They frequently participated in school-level in-service trainings but had relatively fewer opportunities to attend division, regional, or national trainings. Despite this, most obtained outstanding performance ratings and demonstrated a highly positive attitude toward participation in school-wide program decision-making.
2. The school administrator-respondents were predominantly female, married, and between 47 and 51 years old, with a mean age of 46.63 years. Most held a Master's Degree, while others had earned doctoral units, had monthly family incomes ranging from ₱30,000 to ₱39,999, and had 19 years or more of administrative experience. They commonly participated in school-level professional development activities, predominantly practiced instructional leadership, and strongly recognized the value of teacher participation in school-wide decision-making.
3. Teacher-respondents perceived their involvement in school-wide program decision-making to be to a great extent across the domains of curriculum and instruction, learner development and support, school policy formulation, resource allocation and utilization, and program monitoring and evaluation, indicating that teachers actively participated in key aspects of school governance.
4. School administrator-respondents perceived teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making to a very great extent across all governance domains, reflecting a highly favorable assessment of teachers' participation in planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and organizational decision-making.
5. Both teachers and school administrators reported high levels of teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making, although administrators perceived teacher participation to be slightly higher than did teachers. Overall, both groups shared a positive perception of teachers' active role in school governance.
6. Among the teacher profile variables, attitude toward participation, years in teaching, and relevant in-service trainings were significantly associated with the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making. Attitude toward participation exhibited the strongest positive relationship, while teaching experience and participation in professional development activities demonstrated weaker but statistically significant associations. The remaining profile variables showed no significant relationships with teacher involvement.
7. Among the school administrator profile variables, only highest educational attainment and attitude toward teacher participation were significantly associated with the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making. Educational attainment demonstrated the strongest positive relationship, whereas attitude toward teacher participation showed a weaker but statistically significant association. No significant relationships were observed for the remaining administrator profile variables.
8. Teacher-respondents perceived the promotion and implementation of teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making to be highly challenging. The most prominent challenges included insufficient communication, organizational practices favoring administrative control, and heavy workload, all of which were perceived as barriers to meaningful teacher participation.
9. School administrator-respondents likewise perceived promoting teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making to be highly challenging. The most frequently identified concerns were insufficient



communication and the lack of incentives for teacher participation, while teachers' workload was also recognized as a challenge affecting participation.

10. Significant positive relationships were found between the extent of teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making and the challenges perceived by both teachers and school administrators. These findings indicate that organizational and professional challenges were associated with the level of teacher participation in school governance, underscoring the importance of addressing these barriers to foster more collaborative decision-making processes.

Overall, the findings provide empirical evidence that teacher involvement in school-wide program decision-making is associated with teachers' professional attitudes, experience, and opportunities for professional development, as well as administrators' educational preparation and orientation toward participatory leadership. The study further highlights the importance of cultivating collaborative governance structures that encourage meaningful teacher engagement in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of school programs. These findings offer valuable implications for strengthening instructional leadership, supporting effective curriculum implementation, enhancing evidence-informed instructional practices, informing school-based management and educational policy initiatives, and guiding teacher education and professional development programs that promote collaborative and evidence-informed school governance. Since the study employed a descriptive-correlational design, the findings should be interpreted as demonstrating associations among variables rather than causal relationships.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered.

1. School heads and administrators may strengthen communication and collaboration systems by conducting regular consultative meetings, utilizing official communication platforms, and ensuring the timely dissemination of information to promote transparency and meaningful teacher participation in school-wide decision-making.
2. Schools may institutionalize participatory decision-making by providing teachers with meaningful representation in school committees and working groups responsible for curriculum planning, policy development, resource allocation, and program evaluation.
3. Schools and the Schools Division Office may expand professional development opportunities by providing equitable access to in-service training on collaborative leadership, participatory governance, data-informed decision-making, and evidence-based school management for both teachers and school administrators.
4. Schools may establish mentoring or coaching programs in which experienced teachers support less experienced colleagues in developing the knowledge, confidence, and leadership skills necessary for effective participation in school-wide decision-making.
5. School administrators and educational leaders may pursue advanced professional development and graduate studies that enhance their competencies in instructional leadership, collaborative governance, evidence-informed decision-making, and teacher empowerment.
6. Schools may develop recognition and incentive programs that acknowledge meaningful teacher participation in school governance through both intrinsic incentives, such as leadership opportunities and professional recognition, and appropriate extrinsic rewards consistent with existing policies.
7. Schools may further strengthen collaborative school cultures by promoting shared leadership practices that encourage teachers' active participation in planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and continuous improvement of school programs.
8. School administrators may review existing workload management practices by allocating dedicated time for collaborative planning and decision-making activities and by minimizing unnecessary non-teaching tasks that may limit teacher participation.
9. Schools and the Schools Division Office may develop and regularly monitor action plans that address barriers to teacher participation, particularly those related to communication, organizational support, professional development, and collaborative governance.
10. Educational leadership development programs may integrate competencies related to participatory leadership, distributed leadership, collaborative governance, and evidence-informed school management to better prepare current and aspiring school leaders for inclusive decision-making practices.
11. Curriculum developers may incorporate collaborative planning, teacher leadership, and evidence-informed decision-making into curriculum implementation frameworks and instructional planning processes to strengthen teachers' participation in curriculum development and continuous instructional improvement.

12. Teacher education institutions may strengthen pre-service and in-service teacher education programs by integrating learning experiences that develop teacher leadership, professional agency, collaborative problem-solving, and participation in school governance.
13. Educational policymakers, particularly those within the Department of Education, may consider further strengthening policies and implementation guidelines that support meaningful teacher participation in school governance while promoting collaborative, evidence-informed, and participatory leadership practices across schools.
14. Future researchers may extend the present study by involving larger and more diverse samples, examining additional organizational and leadership variables, employing mixed-methods or longitudinal research designs, and exploring teacher participation across different educational contexts to provide a more comprehensive understanding of school-wide program decision-making.

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